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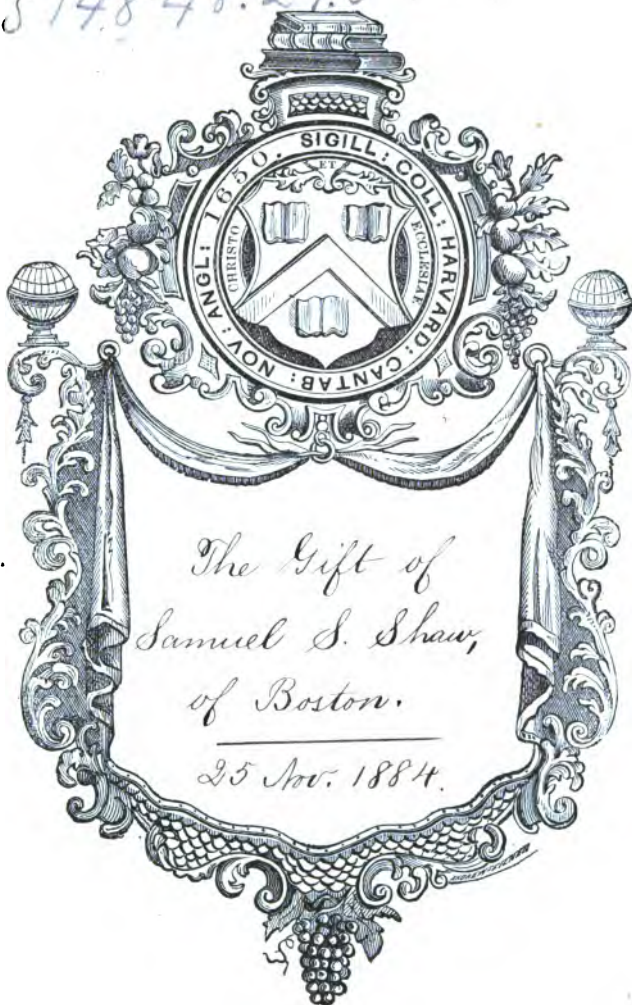
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GROTON CENTENNIAL

TO BE CELEBRATED

September 6, 1881,

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE STATE OF CON-
NECTICUT AND OF THE UNITED STATES.

[FROM THE REPORT OF THE CONNECTICUT BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR 1881.]

NEW HAVEN:
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1884 Nov. 25
Gift to
Samuel S. Shaw
of Britain

The year 1781 was an important epoch in the history of Connecticut. Its lessons of patriotism may be best illustrated and enforced during this Centennial year by recalling the character and heroic deeds of our fathers, so soon to be commemorated by the State and Nation. That our youth, for whose special benefit both the State and Nation unite in celebrating this anniversary, may not fail to reap its benefits, this paper is furnished gratuitously to the teachers of Connecticut, who are respectfully invited to carry out in their schools the suggestions herein made. The discipline gained by thus studying the pivotal events of the past and investigating the leading transactions of the present may and should mature into a valuable habit. EVENTS should be prime factors in developing the faculties of the juvenile mind. Let the history of Connecticut—brought thus vividly to mind—awaken a just State pride and strengthen that reverence for our fathers which will foster the imitation of their virtues and kindle new inspiration for the future; for what a State may become depends much on what it has been.

THE GROTON CENTENNIAL.

The Centennial Celebration to occur at Groton Heights, September 6th, 1881, renders the present a most opportune time to teach our revolutionary history in the schools of Connecticut. Certainly all our youth should now become familiar with the incidents and lessons of the Groton conflict. Sentiments of patriotism and piety should be taught in our schools, fostering lofty ideals of country and duty. This coming celebration, in which both the State and Nation unite, favors and facilitates the study of our revolutionary history during the coming summer, when the struggles thus commemorated will be prominent topics of conversation as well as of discussion in all Connecticut journals. Our teachers should take advantage of this opportune period for *oral lessons* on the characters and achievements of the founders of the republic. Such lessons may awaken a historic spirit and fondness for reading, and that too of books of sterling worth. As a culture study, history has been greatly underrated. No study is better fitted to give breadth and comprehensiveness, or to provide an antidote to narrowness and bigotry.

The Connecticut Legislature has appropriated \$3,000, for the expenses of this Centennial Celebration, and Congress has appropriated \$5,000, for the same purpose, and another \$5,000, for the improvement and completion of the monument. The educational bearings of such a celebration and monument furnished the strongest argument in favor of these appropriations. The active coöperation of our teachers is therefore essential in order to fully accomplish the results designed by these liberal benefactions. Their oral lessons may also develop a just State pride and interest in Connecticut history. The value of this feeling is too little appreciated. The sentiment

that honors and cherishes one's birth-place and town and State is noble and ennobling and has ever characterized the greatest and best of men, and, indeed, is a prime element of true manhood. The want of it indicates a serious defect of character. A man without local attachments can have no genuine patriotism. As happy in one place as in another, he is like a tree planted in a tub, portable indeed, but at the expense of growth and strength. I believe with Dr. Bushnell, that "The man who does not wish to love and honor the town and State in which he was born, has no heart in his bosom. We are too little aware of our noble history as a State, a history of such transcendent beauty, freshened by so many heroic incidents, having so great a wealth of character and achievement. This early history of Connecticut is really the most beautiful that was ever permitted to any people in the world." This cannot justly be called a partial but unfounded laudation of one's State. The historian Bancroft, a citizen of Massachusetts, biased by no Connecticut predilections, says of Connecticut, in language strong as that of Dr. Bushnell, "There is no State in the Union, and I know not any in the world, in whose early history, if I were a citizen thereof, I could find more of which to be proud and less that I should wish to blot."

In an address given at the ninety-eighth anniversary of the Groton massacre, Dr. L. W. Bacon well says:

"Two facts, illustrated to the eye, must be held as characteristic of the State of Connecticut in its relation to the War of Independence. The first is that bloodiest and most atrocious deed of all the war, which is commemorated by the lofty obelisk beside us. The other is that this should be the only battle-monument within the boundaries of the State—that Connecticut should be a State without battle-fields of a later date than the war of self-defense against the Pequot savages. The only exception, if it can be called an exception, is that of the skirmish at Danbury in 1777, and the invasion of New Haven in 1779. These instances are the only ones in the history of Connecticut for two hundred years, in which the armed force of an enemy has remained over night upon her soil. These two facts, that Connecticut should possess the scene of the most atrocious and malignant massacre of the war, and that

she should possess no other battle-field, are facts that stand in significant relation to each other, and a relation that is in the highest degree honorable to the State. It was the very fact that the whole of her little territory was so loyal to liberty that oppression could never get a foothold here,—the fact that her whole resources of men and material were freely employed, not in self-defense, but in advancing the cause of freedom outside of her own boundaries, through gallant deeds by land and sea, that instigated the invader and the tory to a special malignity of revenge, in the few brief and stealthy blows which they were able to deliver at the more exposed points of her seaboard. It is a grand thing to be able to point to monuments like those at Concord and Bunker Hill, to historic fields like those of Monmouth and Saratoga. But rightly understood, it is a far nobler thing to point, as Connecticut can, to a territory without a battle-field, and for its solitary battle-monument to this silent witness to the unsurpassed heroism of her sons, and the unequalled ferocity of her enemies, in the war for the national independence.

The chief origin of this distinction of Connecticut is doubtless to be found in the fact that, alone of all the thirteen colonies, she entered into the struggle for independence complete, with her governor and council and the whole machinery of the colonial government. In Connecticut, there never was a *revolutionary* war. In other colonies there was more or less of revolution. Existing authorities, having proved false to the people, had to be supplanted, and provisional governments, extemporized for the emergency, erected in their stead. We in Connecticut fought through a war not of revolution but of conservation—not for the achieving of new liberties but for the defense of the old. And this fact gave a solid strength to her resistance to British intrusions, which was impossible to the other colonies, burdened by the incubus of royal governors, affected more or less by the social influence of their petty courts, divided, consequently, in some measure, into two parties, patriot and loyalist, and more or less disorganized by the sudden necessity of reconstructing their governmental machinery. It is not claiming too much for Connecticut to say that it was the principal base of supplies for the national cause, and

that the grandest figure, next to Washington himself, among all the heroes of that heroic age, is the figure of the Puritan governor, Jonathan Trumbull, 'Brother Jonathan.'

A day's ride to the north of us, beside the broad village street of ancient Lebanon, was the little store and counting-room that are justly designated in local tradition as the "War Office" of the War of Independence. Here was the commissariat on which again and again the famishing army of Washington drew the supplies that saved it and the country. It was natural enough that the strenuous patriot who was wielding all the resources of his State with such splendid energy and efficiency for the American cause should be made the object of peculiar spite, such as manifested itself in the offering of a price for his head."

The Groton Monument Association was incorporated by the Legislature in 1826 under an act which provided that \$15,000 should be raised for this purpose within four years. The first of the By-laws as now amended provides that any person may become a member of this society on the payment of two dollars to the Secretary, which will secure a certificate of membership. The corner stone of the monument was laid with appropriate ceremonies in the presence of a vast concourse of people, September 6, 1826. The monument was completed in 1830. It is built of large granite blocks quarried near by, and stands on the summit of "Groton Heights." It is one hundred and twenty-seven feet high, twenty-six feet square at the base and twelve feet at the top. Its interior is circular in form. The ascent is made by a serpentine flight of one hundred and sixty-eight stone steps. From the top is presented a magnificent panoramic view with the picturesque Thames and adjacent towns near by, and stretching on to Rhode Island and Long Island, including many intermediate points of great beauty.

The monument needs extensive repairs and an obelisk top of cut stone. The \$5,000 appropriated by Congress will not meet more than one-third the cost of the contemplated improvements. About 500 members, male and female, have recently joined the Association, paying each the two dollar membership fee. It is proposed to raise the requisite funds by inducing the citizens of the State to become members of

the Association. Any teachers, friends of education or citizens, male or female who may remit \$2 to J. J. Copp, Esq., Groton, the Secretary of the Society, will receive from him a certificate of membership of the Monument Association and will help on a worthy object. A handsome park in front of the monument has been recently purchased through the efforts of ladies in Groton, which will soon be graded and enclosed with curbing.

A marble slab was placed on the exterior of the monument at the time of its erection containing the following inscription:

"This Monument was erected under the patronage of the State of Connecticut, A. D. 1830, and in the 55th year of the Independence of the U. S. A., in memory of the patriots who fell in the massacre at Fort Griswold, near this spot, on the 6th of September, 1781, when the British, under the command of the traitor Benedict Arnold, burnt the towns of New London and Groton, and spread desolation and woe throughout this region.

"'Zebulon and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto death in the high places of the field.'—JUDGES, 5TH CHAPTER, 18TH VERSE."

A marble slab on the interior contains "The list of the men who fell at Fort Griswold, September 6th, 1781."

The following is a summary of the excellent oration given by the late Lafayette S. Foster at the Ninety-ninth Groton Anniversary, only thirteen days before his death. It was his last public address, and is worthy to be cherished as his parting legacy to the people of Connecticut.

He attended several of our Teachers' Institutes, at two of which he gave admirable addresses, drawing practical lessons from his own experience as a teacher and evincing the heartiest sympathy with the work of Public Schools. It would be a valuable paper for the teachers and youth of Connecticut if one of these unwritten addresses on "Industry, Perseverance and Self-reliance the secrets of success," could be reproduced. These traits were happily illustrated in his life, and hence he rose from the position of a humble country boy to eminence as Judge, Orator, Senator and Statesman. Becoming early a great reader, he kept up this habit amidst the exactions of a laborious profession, and found his recreation and delight in studying our best works of science and literature. His habit of memorizing choice selections of prose and poetry is worthy of imitation.

On this spot, hallowed in every patriotic heart, we are again assembled to honor and to cherish the memory of the illustrious dead. But one year is wanting to complete the century, ninety-nine years having passed by since the ground on which we stand was wet with the life blood of patriots and heroes. Those patriots and heroes were our fathers. They gave their lives for us and ours, and for their native land.

Many times on this anniversary day, with spirit-stirring music, and greeted by peals of artillery, the stately procession has wound up these Heights, waving aloft our national banner, glorious in its beauty, glorious in its history, and still more glorious as the sign and symbol of liberty.

It was under this flag that our fathers here fought, counting not their lives dear to them if sacrificed in its defence. This flag was then scarcely known among national ensigns. A few friendly powers had recognized the new republic; but our independence was not fully assured, and we still had our place to win in the family of nations. Less than three millions of people, and a narrow strip of country bordering on the Atlantic coast between the river St. Croix on the northeast and the St. Mary's on the southwest, comprised our territory and our population. Now the whole boundless continent is not, indeed, yet ours; but we have a country vast in extent, ocean-bounded on two cardinal points of the compass, and a population of fifty millions. Instead of thirteen feeble colonies, with the original thirteen stripes and dimly twinkling stars on our national banner, we now have thirty-eight stars, the gladsome light of which irradiates the nations. Three generations of men have passed from the stage of life since the events transpired which we this day commemorate. It has been the custom from the beginning to observe the day with fitting ceremonies. Let us not fail in the pious duty which was so worthily performed by the generations before us. They paid their debt, not ours; that, we alone can pay. Each generation, not the past only, but each succeeding generation through all the coming years, will owe an infinite debt of gratitude to the noble and gallant men, whose bones lie mouldering here. Far distant be the day, when the services of this anniversary shall be regarded as superfluous, and so be omitted and forgotten. Only when patriotism becomes lukewarm, can such things be;

and a lukewarm patriot is no better than a lukewarm corpse. The sons of sires who perished here will cherish the memory of their fathers so long as they shall be worthy of their glorious inheritance. Every son of Groton and of this vicinity will hallow this spot so long as love of liberty and love of country find a home in his bosom.

It is no part of our purpose, in desiring to perpetuate the memory of this day, to keep alive or to excite feelings of hostility against the government or people of Great Britain. The most peaceful and amicable relations subsist between that government and ours. So may it ever be! Whosoever shall stir up strife between us, is not only an enemy of both countries but an enemy of human progress and the best interests of the human race.

England was the home of our fathers; their mother country. It is true she showed them, at home, more of the attributes of a step mother, a harsh, unfeeling step mother, than of a natural parent; and when they migrated to these then inhospitable shores, she followed them with vexatious demands and exactions wholly unwarranted by the constitution of the realm. Remonstrance proved unavailing, and our fathers resisted. The voice of Europe was on the side of the colonies. The wisest statesmen of England, in both houses of parliament, pronounced our fathers in the right. A stubborn ministry persisted in their tyrannical course, and our fathers obtained independence. It is doubtful if any enlightened British statesman of this generation could be found, who would not now agree that the resistance of the colonies to the claim of the crown was fully warranted by the plain principles of the British constitution.

What progress has the world made in human government in the last hundred years! What a contrast between the Tory ministry of Lord North, under King George the Third, in the last century, and the present ministry of Great Britain, under the beneficent reign of her majesty, Queen Victoria! How cheering to all lovers of liberty and free institutions, to look at the principles of government just enunciated by Mr. Gladstone. They are the principles of our Declaration of Independence and of the fathers of our constitution. They are the principles on which the Republic of the United States is

founded, principles of right and truth, and eternal justice. We are proud to call England our mother country when she avows and acts upon principles like these. We forget and forgive the strifes and wars of the past, and cordially extend to her the right hand of national fellowship and of national friendship.

War is undoubtedly the greatest curse that can befall a nation. Still we must regard some wars as justifiable and necessary. When such wars break out, when the rights and liberties of a free people are in deadly peril; when the hand of the destroyer is stretched forth to lay waste their possessions and bring desolation and ruin to their homes and firesides, the highest and noblest attributes of the human mind are then brought into intense, living action. The tongue of eloquence then becomes endowed with a superhuman power, and while listening to the words of the patriotic orator, speaking from his fiery heart, it seems in very deed as though the gods had come down to us in the likeness of men. In the days that preceded our Revolutionary struggle, Patrick Henry and James Otis bowed the hearts of the men of Virginia and the men of Massachusetts as the heart of one man. Great and well deserved as is the tribute of honor and praise that we render to those whose burning words stimulate to deeds of heroic valor, still the highest meed, the brightest diadem with which to adorn earthly brows is reserved for men, who, when duty calls, go forth to fight, perchance to die, in defence of the homes, the firesides and the liberties of themselves and their fellow countrymen. We instinctively give up our hearts without reservation to such heroes and defenders. We honor them while living; we revere them when dead.

Let us glance at the situation of our country as it was just prior to the day we commemorate, in September, 1781. The battle of Saratoga had been fought, and a glorious victory won for our arms four years before. Professor, afterwards Sir E. F. Creasy reckons this one of the decisive battles of the world from Marathon to Waterloo. It had wonderful effect on our cause in Europe, giving as it did full assurance that the colonies were able to achieve and maintain their own independence. That independence was soon recognized by foreign powers. Nations like individuals find friends most numerous when least needed. Burgoyne's march from Canada towards Albany,

during the spring and summer of 1777 had met with no interruption except the check at Oriskany from the brave Herkimer, and the check at Bennington from the no less brave Stark. Those disasters were to detachments only, and it was regarded in Europe almost as a foregone conclusion that Burgoyne with his army would reach Albany. A line of posts would then be established from Canada to the city of New York, and as Great Britain had control of the sea coast, all communication between New England and the States south would be completely cut off. Gates and Arnold, or rather, the brave men under them, changed all that.

During the subsequent four years, neither side gained any decided advantage. Several brilliant affairs took place, the most brilliant of all was the taking of Stony Point by storm, by Gen. Wayne on the 18th of July, 1779. The assault was made at midnight, and the work was carried wholly by the bayonet. The advanced parties of twenty men each were thrown forward to remove obstructions, and out of one of these parties of twenty, seventeen were killed or wounded. In the same month and year, July, 1779, Gen. Tryon made a raid, from New York into Connecticut by way of Long Island Sound. He first landed at New Haven, then at Fairfield, and then at Norwalk, burning, plundering and destroying property. The stay of the enemy was short. They passed but a single night in any of these towns, after which they returned to their vessels. A foreign foe has never found Connecticut a desirable stopping place. In these instances, they tarried but a night. No doubt, they wisely anticipated that should they risk sleeping on our soil a night, it might be the sleep that knows no waking. Our poet, Halleck, spoke historically as well as poetically, in saying that Connecticut was a land

"Where friends will find a welcome,
Foes a grave."

The year 1780 was a dark year for our country. In May of that year there were but 7,000 continental troops embodied between the Chesapeake and Canada. On the first week in June, Washington had under him but 3,760 men fit for duty. In September of this year, Arnold made his name forever infamous by his treason to his country. The campaign in the south had been almost a succession of defeats and disasters.

Perhaps the most significant event in these three years following Burgoyne's surrender was the vote of the Methodists of the United States at their general meeting in 1780, that "slave-keeping was contrary to the law of God, man and nature."

In May, 1781, Washington and Rochambeau met at Wethersfield, and agreed on a plan for the campaign. Clinton held New York and Cornwallis was in Virginia. It was agreed that the American and French land forces, together with the French naval force, should be concentrated on the Chesapeake. Clinton was thoroughly deceived, thinking that the movement was to be made, not on Virginia, but on New York. He had sent Arnold to Virginia in January before, and he was there in command in May, when Cornwallis arrived from the south. Superseding Arnold in the command of the British troops, and despising him too heartily to allow him to remain in his camp, he ordered him back to New York. Clinton remained under the delusion till near the 1st of September that Washington was designing to attack him in New York.

Arnold, who no doubt was eager for employment, now obtained the command of the expedition to this place. With about 2,000 troops he crossed over from Long Island and landed on our shores on the morning of the 6th of September, 1781. About one-half of the force, headed by Arnold himself, landed on the west side of the harbor, a little below the lighthouse, and made their way toward New London. The other half, under the immediate command of Col. Eyre, landed on the east, or Groton side of the river, and marched toward this point. Two forts, if works so insignificant as these were, in a military point of view may properly be so called, were the only defences of the harbor. Fort Trumbull on the New London side, was open to the west, or land side, and was therefore wholly indefensible to an attack from that quarter. Capt. Shapley, the commanding officer, had been ordered to abandon the fort on the approach of the enemy, and with his little band of men, to cross the river and join the garrison here. Accordingly, after firing a volley on the attacking column, and spiking the guns in his batteries, he took to his boats and crossed the river to this place. The enemy's vessels were so close upon him that seven of his men were wounded by the fire from their decks, and one of his boats was captured.

To Col. William Ledyard, the command of these two forts, and the protection of these towns had been entrusted. On the first alarm in the morning, he had sent messengers to the Governor, to inform him of the situation. After giving his orders to the officer in command at Fort Trumbull, he took a boat at the ferry on the New London side to cross over to this fort, which he determined to hold. To some friends, who gathered around him to shake hands at parting, he said, as he stepped into the boat: "If I must lose to-day honor or life, you who know me will know which it will be." This gallant man, with about 150 others, made the garrison of this little fort.

The attacking column, under Col. Eyre, was halted in its approach, and a flag was sent forward to demand the surrender of the fort. Col. Ledyard called a council of war, and the opinion was unanimous in favor of resistance. "We shall not surrender, let the consequences be what they may," was the answer returned.

The assault was made. The defence was all that so few imperfectly armed men, two-thirds of whom were wholly undisciplined, and unacquainted with the usages of war, could make it. That such an imperfect work, so imperfectly manned, should be able to hold out against such a powerful attacking force, was not to be hoped for. The brave little garrison was overpowered, and the enemy, in overwhelming numbers, entered the fort. Col. Eyre, the British commanding officer, and Major Montgomery, the second in command, both fell in the assault outside the works. The slaughter of our men went on *after the fort was entered and the garrison had laid down their arms*. Between eighty and ninety of the devoted band were killed—between thirty and forty wounded, many of them mortally. The loss of the enemy, it is believed, was between two and three hundred men.

Such, in brief, was the event that we this day commemorate. It occupies but little space on the page of history. Those who are accustomed to judge of the importance of battles, by the number of men engaged, or the number who fell on the field, will doubtless consider this a very insignificant affair. The men of this vicinity certainly regard it otherwise. It is well, it is wise, it is noble that they should do so. A Spartan king and three hundred men threw themselves as a barrier before

the uncounted hosts of Xerxes, and perished in defence of their country. In all human history, what deed of arms, though performed by thousands, is encircled with such a halo of glory as surrounds Leonidas and the three hundred at Thermopylæ? What epitaph so glorious as that inscribed on the column erected where they fell?—"Stranger, go and tell the Lacedemonians that we lie here in obedience to her laws." The stern laws of Sparta punished with death the soldier who left the battle-field in the face of an enemy.

The slaughter of our men after they had laid down their arms on the taking of the fort was an unnecessarily cruel and barbarous act, though the laws of war do justify the victors who take a fortress by storm in refusing quarter to the captured garrison. A brave enemy usually disdains to avail himself of a law so repugnant to every generous and noble feeling. None but a coward's hand will strike a fallen, unresisting foe. Two years before this time, the fortress at Stony Point was assaulted and carried by storm by our troops. Though the attack was at midnight, when the wild and fierce passions which a hand-to-hand fight must necessarily engender, are free from the restraints which the daylight imposes, and horrible deeds may be done because the darkness will cover them, yet not one man in the fortress was put to death except in fair combat. The British authorities praised the magnanimity of our troops; and admitted that they would have been justified in putting every man to the sword. We set them an example too lofty for them to follow.

At a later period, in the following month of October, on the night of the 14th, five weeks after this fort was taken, two advanced redoubts, making part of the fortifications with which Lord Cornwallis had surrounded himself and his army at Yorktown, which was then invested by the French and American armies, were taken by storm. One of these redoubts was taken by the French, one by the Americans. Col. Hamilton commanded the American attacking column, and the redoubt assigned him was carried by the bayonet, without firing a gun. Not a man of the enemy was injured, after he ceased to resist. Our soldiers thus showed to the British army and to the world, not only that they would not make a precedent for refusing quarter to an enemy asking it, but that they

would not be provoked by a barbarous example of a contrary character into retaliation.

But whatever may be said in palliation of the refusal of quarter to this brave little garrison after its surrender, the laws and usages of war, barbarous as they are, furnish no apology for the act of killing the commander, the brave Colonel Ledyard. Who the perpetrator of this foul crime was, is not absolutely certain. It is better that his name should be buried in the infamy which surrounds it, rather than it should ever again be spoken.

Overpowering numbers having entered the fort, the fighting ceased, and our men laid down their arms. A British officer, apparently in command, called out "Who commands this fort?" The gallant Colonel Ledyard, modestly but bravely stepping forward, said, "I did sir, but you do now," at the same time presenting his sword, as the vanquished does to the victor. The officer received it, and ruffian-like plunged the weapon into his body, thus killing instantly an unarmed, unresisting prisoner. It was a cold-blooded, brutal murder. Had the sword, when proffered not been accepted, had the reply been, "Expect no quarters, keep your sword and defend yourself," if death had followed, though it might have seemed barbarous, still there would have been some manliness in the transaction. Under the actual circumstances, it was a most foul, aggravated, treacherous murder. Let the memory of him who committed it perish forever, let his name be forever unspoken by all brave and true men.

Consider briefly some few of the valuable lessons that the events which we this day commemorate so plainly teach. It may be said in the first place that no spirit of aggressive war, no war for conquest, goes forth from this place. Such a spirit is ever to be earnestly rebuked and deprecated. We have seen, not now for the first time certainly, that the war in which our fathers were engaged was a just war, recognized as just by friends of arbitrary power on the continent of Europe, and even by the wisest statesmen of Great Britain who urged it against us. Marathon and Thermopylæ are perhaps the places most renowned in the world as having been the scenes of the most heroic valor, the loftiest patriotism, the most perfect self sacrifice ever exhibited by men in defense of their country. I need

but allude to the immense influence which the deeds there done have had not only over Greece, but over all countries and nations through the succeeding centuries, and, I may add, will continue to have till all the centuries are ended. It is an influence that gathers strength in the march of time. To institute any comparison between the contest on these heights which we now commemorate, and those events so famous in Grecian history, would be thought too extravagant to be entertained for a moment. The immediate result of the struggle was certainly of but comparatively little importance; but as indicating the temper and spirit of the people, it had much to do with the question of American independence. Do not these events from Grecian history come to us magnified by time and distance? Bring them, widely separated as they are in fact, into close connection, in imagination, with this deed of our Revolutionary fathers, and then carefully analyze each situation. When the result shall have been reached, and you are prepared to specify the causes which give eternal fame to the Grecian localities and Grecian heroes connected with them, then point out if you can, one substantial reason why these heights, and our heroes, are not entitled to fame equally lasting. The plain of Marathon, the straits of Thermopylæ, were wet with the blood of those who perished for Greece; these heights, with the blood of those who perished for America. If Miltiades and the ten thousand who fought at Marathon, if Leonidas and the three hundred who fought and perished at Thermopylæ have thus made their names immortal, shall not Ledyard and his devoted band who perished here, in a cause no less sacred, have their names on the roll of immortality? *I say confidently, as a son of Connecticut I say proudly, there is no spot in any country on this green earth more consecrated by patriotic blood than this. No braver heroes rest in the soil of the proudest clime than those who lie buried here.* Young men of Groton and of this vicinity, come up to these heights annually, and at the base of this memorial column, reverently, as at a sacred shrine, pay your vows and honors. Here get inspiration to lead lives worthy of these your illustrious progenitors. Live nobly and you will die nobly.



